



<http://www.crfg-la.org>

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# LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

September/October 2014 Volume XIX

Date: Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens

Tom Del Hotal will speak on Berries

Tom has been horticulturist and nurseryman for over 35 years. He holds four advanced certifications from the California Association of Nursery and Garden Centers. In addition, he is a Certified Arborist, a Certified Pesticide Applicator and a member of the International Plant Propagators Society. Tom has been a member of the California Rare Fruit Growers for over 30 years and has been the past Chair of the San Diego chapter. His specialty is in fruiting plants for warm winter climates such as Southern California. Tom is a part-time horticulture instructor in the Landscape and Nursery Department at Southwestern College. He holds a B.A. degree in biology as a park ranger naturalist and brings a *whole system approach* to his view of horticulture. Tom works full-time at The Home Depot in Lemon Grove as a sales associate and as the district trainer for the garden department. Tom also owns and operates his part-time business, *Fantasia Gardens*, from his home in Lemon Grove, CA. *Fantasia Gardens* is a fruit tree pruning and consulting business specializing in fruiting plants. Home and small-scale orchard design and management services are also offered by *Fantasia Gardens*.

Please see Pat Valdivia to **order your CRFG name badge** at the 9/27/14 meeting!

Date: Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> (Please note the date)

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens

Tim Thompson will speak about mangoes

Tim Thompson, known as the Mango Professor, grew up on a ranch between Ventura and Santa Paula. His dad was one of those people with a green thumb and he taught his kids to love gardening. Tim has been working for over 30 years to change the mango from what was a tropical plant, into one that will grow *here like* citrus and avocados, using what his father taught him. He will share some of his secrets with us at this meeting.

### Attention All Members

If your last name begins with:

**A-M** please bring something for our **September** table.

**N-Z** for the **October** meeting

Since we are usually eating around noon, and even though we love all those sweet treats, please also consider a dish more appropriate for a lunchtime meal.

Save the Date

November 22<sup>nd</sup> – TBD

December 13<sup>th</sup> – Annual Holiday Party

Photo credits in this issue: Edgar Valdivia, Paul Kao, Catherine Diaz, Deborah Oisboid

# Words From Our Chairman



Dear Los Angeles Chapter Members,  
Hope all are in good health, and continue to be active in your orchards/gardens. As I write this, today ends three

quarters of 2014.... What? Where did it go? Hope you had a great summer and accomplished all you wanted to or at least three quarters of it.

The Los Angeles Chapter California Rare Fruit Growers hosted a tour of La Verne Nursery 8/30/2014 at their Piru Facility.

Approximately 45-50 people attended. Although La Verne Nursery does not sell retail, we as guests, were able to purchase trees after the tour.

Dan Nelson, Director of nursery operations was our tour guide. He also gave a citrus grafting demonstration showing us how their nursery



grafts new scion wood to rootstock. New federal regulations require the use of certified clean scion wood and almost a clean room

atmosphere. New shipping requirements are closely regulated and time consuming. Be prepared for increased costs of citrus trees at your local nursery or garden center.

On the tour, I learned something about Goji plants that I did not know. After the plants fruit, cut them down to about 15 to 18 inches high. The plants will grow back stronger and just as tall as they are now but with more fruit.

I liked the way La Verne Nursery grows their Pitaya "Dragon Fruit". They are planted in the ground, growing up an 8' X 4" X 4" post with a



piece of concrete reinforcing mesh mounted horizontally on top that holds the plant upright. Dan's workers were hand pollinating and the plants were fruiting.

I purchased several trees, one being a 15 gal. Moro blood orange. While all oranges are likely of hybrid origin between the pomelo and the tangerine, blood oranges originated as a mutation of the sweet orange. I just love their dark deep flesh and the orange red blush color of the skin. I also have a Sanguinello and a Tarocco blood orange tree. I always thought my Sanguinello was the best orange ever; but, I was told by someone (and I won't name her) that I must have never tasted a Tarocco orange. The name Tarocco is thought to be derived from an exclamation of wonder expressed by the farmer who was shown this fruit by its discoverer.

Yes! I had to admit that I have never even seen my Tarocco tree flower, let alone eaten the fruit. And for this reason, I was planning on removing it and replacing it with my newly purchased Moro. The Moro already has 33 good size oranges on it! I was also told that my Sanguinello was probably missed marked and really is a Tarocco! Oh what dilemma! Now I can't chop down my 5 year old Tarocco, which grows only big leaves, and tall waterspouts with two-inch thorns. Dan recommended to stop feeding it with a nitrogen fertilizer and use something like a 0-50-20 blend. Anyone know where I could find that?

I could go on and on about the La Verne tour, and I will at a later date. The levels of expertise and information was very



professional and enlightening. A big shout out to my friend Dan Nelson and his staff for making this a very enjoyable day. And thank you to Richard Wilson owner of La Verne nursery. Now plant them trees and enjoy!

**Jim Schopper**

## LOOKING BACK

By **Debbie Schopper, Member at Large**

### July Meeting

Our July meeting was held at the Sepulveda Garden Center. Our guest speaker was Albert Chang. Albert is a longtime member of the CRFG, Los Angeles chapter. Albert is the San Fernando District Director of California Garden Clubs, SFV Director of the Seed Library of Los Angeles, President of the SFV Rose Society, and serves on eight other boards. Albert spoke of the subject: **Seed Saving**. Members received a 30-page guide booklet titled, *A Seed Saving Guide for Gardeners and Farmers from Organic Seed Alliance*. (For PDF versions of this and other publications [www.seedalliance.org](http://www.seedalliance.org)) The booklet teaches how to plant the best varieties, maintain crop "genetics", cultivate, harvest, process and store seeds, including a crop specific chart and resources for gaining more seed growing knowledge.



Albert spoke on pollination and how some plants are pollinated from the wind such as corn and can be viable for miles. Some seeds will cross pollinate such as broccoli

and cauliflower, and the differences of dry seed and wet seed method of processing seed crops. We were encouraged to have a map of our yards and to know how our plants look at different stages of growth. For information regarding the seed savers exchange, go to [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org)

Organic Seed Alliance  
PO Box 772  
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Our chapter paid tribute to **Jenny Fox**. Several members spoke of her gardening enthusiasm. She will be missed.

The July meeting ended with a potluck luncheon and a silent auction. Thank you to Charles Portney for donating so



many plants including babaco papaya, agave, strawberry tree, ground cherries, cape gooseberries, blackberry offshoots, herbs, cherry of the Rio Grande, tamarillos, mango seedlings, sugar cane, and more. A thank you to others who also donated el bumpo cherimoyas and other plants for our auction.

### August Meeting

The August meeting was a field trip to the La Verne Nursery located in Piru. This trip included a tour of the nursery by Dan Nelson, Director of Nursery Operations.

For much more information, please read "The Chairman's Corner" of the newsletter.

## FROM OUR MEMBERS

**The Kandil Sinap That Wasn't:** A Public Apology to the participants of the CRFG-LA Scion Exchange, **Deborah Oisboid - Part 1**

This is a story about fruit trees, and how I mixed up two apple varieties. But before I go into the sordid explanation, I must begin with an apology: the "Kandil Sinap" scions at the CRFG Scion Exchange this year and last year are NOT what they seem to be. Everyone who took the "Kandil" scions from the exchange will have to re-label their grafts.

It was an honest mistake. And it sort of started with a fig tree that wasn't supposed to be there. One year there was a fig tree in my front yard. I never planted a fig tree. I never wanted a fig tree. (I don't even like figs.) But there it was. Hiding in the succulents I was pulling out. The house had a lot of jade, sedum, and aloe in front of the window and I was tired of it. So I began

removing the succulents. And there it was: a fig sapling, about 4 feet tall. I don't know why I left it there - I don't like figs, as I said. But since I was looking for something new, I left it alone just to see what would happen. The following year I was rewarded with about three figs. They were round and green with a subtle purple stripe and when they split open they were BRIGHT red inside. A tentative taste - and it was love at first bite! Sweet like a strawberry, with very crunchy seeds.

I began a quest to learn what type of fig it was. There were several fig trees in the neighborhood, and for many, many blocks around. Trying to knock on everyone's door was a scary thought. I didn't do it. But I did speak with a Master Gardener who happened to be at the LA County Fair that year. I described the fig - but she said she couldn't be sure unless I brought in some fruit. However, she happened to have a thick tome with her called "Cornucopia - A Source Book for Edible Plants." (Written by Stephen Facciola, published by Kampong Publications, 1998.) I bought a copy of her Very Thick Book, and scoured it up and down, back and forth, until I narrowed it down to a few possible varieties, with Adriatic the most likely one. The following year I brought some figs to the LA Arboretum to confirm my suspicions. But I got an answer that surprised me. The Arboretum expert said since the tree grew from a seed, it was nothing but itself. It was unnamed, unique. If I wanted to, I could even patent it.

I was thrilled! I have a tree that no one else has seen before! I decided to call it "Stroz" because it tastes like strawberries. Maybe I'll patent it. Maybe not. But I was proud of myself for trying to identify it first and planned to use the "Cornucopia" reference book as often as possible in the future.

A nice story, you say, **but what's that got to do with apples?** I'm getting there, trust me! You can probably guess what happened next. A year or two later I had joined the CRFG and was learning how

to graft. Everything was new to me and I was eager to add lots of edibles to my garden. My son told me about a very prolific apple tree in his Middle School horticulture garden, which had the strangest-shaped apples on it. The fruit were tall and thin instead of round. So of course I had to graft it onto my tree at home. The school's tree (and eventually my grafts) produced VERY heavily. They were the first successful grafts on my apple tree and I was very proud of them.

But what variety were they? The teacher couldn't remember. I pulled out my now-handy "Cornucopia" book and read it up and down, back to front, inside and out, looking for ANY apple description, which matched these unusual (to me) fruit. Tall, thin, cylindrical. Indented at the flower end. Pale greenish-yellow skin, sometimes with a red blush; flesh white, cream, or sometimes yellow if left on the tree for a long time. Crisp, sweet, and juicy. The best part - I never had any apple moths attack these apples!



Cornucopia only had one apple described as "cylindrical": Kandil Sinap. I double-checked it online and confirmed the shape and color looked a lot like the pictures on the internet. Maybe the photos were a little more red than mine, but they were probably exposed to more chill hours than we have here in California. And the tree description was perfect: small, pyramidal, very heavy bearing. That must be it! I was sure I now had TWO very cool and unique fruit, and couldn't wait to share them.

***But did she? The story continues in the next issue of CRFG.***

### Digital Resources

Contributed by Pat Valdivia

***New Harvard Study Proves Why The Bees Are All Disappearing***

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/study-strengthens-link-between-neonicotinoids-and-collapse-of-honey-bee-colonies/>

***How to Taste Fruit - Joe Sabol*** on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJEJNwPeTSO>